

Whether Common or Not.



The Old Songs.

The grand old songs of long ago!
How clear their melodies;
They seemed to bear us to the skies
On flow'ry beds of ease.
Beneath their spell we fain would climb
Where Moses stood before,
And view with eyes by faith unloosed
The wondrous landscape o'er.

I want to hear the old time songs
Sung with a Christian zest;
They fill the heart until we feel
We'll be forever blest.
And when their sound fills all the air
It seems that ev'ry soul
Is led to stand with rapturous joy
Where Jordan's waters roll.

No surpliced choirs can sing for me
Those songs of other days
Like they were sung by Christian lips
That loved God's name to praise.
They seemed to bear the weary soul
To mansions in the skies,
And angel hands came reaching down
To wipe our weeping eyes.

The singing of the grand old songs—
How sweet it seems to me!
It brings sweet rest to troubled breast
On life's tempestuous sea.
The grand old songs of other days—
The best the world can know—
He leadeth me, O blessed thought,
Where tranquil waters flow.

The old time songs, the old time tunes!
They touched the hearts of men,
And wanderers from the fold away
Came gladly back again.
When death shall come and I shall stand
Where sullen breakers roar,
I want the songs that mother sang
To waft me to the shore.

Optimist vs. Pessimist.

"The hot weather has destroyed all of our crops."
"Well, we don't have to worry about the price of grain, then."

What's in a Name.

"I see," remarked the machine poet, turning to the helpless passengers on the inside of the seat, "that Rud Kipling has been at it again. Been writing more of what his admirers call 'villie verses.' Say, that fellow Kipling makes me weary. Haven't read his latest eh? Well, you're in luck. How he ever got it into print gets me. The drag that man has with the publishers over in Lun'non makes me wonder. Anybody that'd print such slush as this latest of his has got enough dust in his loft to save the sweet potato crop from freezing.

"What's it about? Boer war, of course. Strikes me that after the dottie record J. Bull has made over in Ham's bailiwick he'd pull the knob and drop a penny in the slot for a new tune. But Ruddle old boy goes right ahead singing daffy songs about John going to do a plenty to 'em. Just listen to the latest:

"It was our fault, and our very great fault, and not the judgment of heaven;
We made an army in our image on an island nine by seven.

Which faithfully mirrored its maker's ideal,
equipment and mental attitude,
And so we got our lesson, and we ought to accept it with gratitude."

"Shades of the Sweet Singer of Michigan! If

the British Tommies are as lame in the feet as this latest of Rud's is, no wonder the Boers land on 'em promiscuous-like so often. Why, I can beat that kind o' verse off-hand any hour in the day. Don't believe it, eh? Just listen to this spur-o'-the-moment stuff:

"It's up to us, and straight up to us, to start some things to doin'.

We've got a joblot of Tommies at work and taxpayers a-going to ruin.

We've hustled and tussled to grab out the gold that's hid in their precious ores,

And all we have got to show for our work is some lickings from long-whiskered Boers.

"Purty poor stuff, eh? 'Course, but it ain't no worse than Rud's. But Rud's got a rep and I ain't. If I had I could grind out that sort o' stuff by the runnin' rod and get a dollar a foot f'r it. That's what Rud gets because he's bilked the people into believin' he's a poet.

"It's all in gettin' a name, so it is. If I write stuff like this latest spasm of Rud's and offer it to anything but the poet's corner of the Podunk Weekly Banner people would say it's me for the nanny house. But Rud writes it an' folks roll their eyes up till the whites look like a fair weather signal and gasp something about Rud's being the only poet in sight along the pike.

"It's all in a name, friends, and I'm out of it."

Too Busy Now.

"Did you pray for rain?"

"Yes."

"Well, it rained. Have you returned thanks for it?"

"Not yet. I've been too busy selling garden truck that was saved by the rain."

Superstition.

"Do you believe in signs?"

"Yes, when I see a boy holding up two fingers like the letter V I'm positive that somebody's going to get wet."

Our Trusting Wives.

"I'm proud of my husband. He is always doing something good and trying to conceal it."

"What's he been doing?"

"I don't know exactly, but last night in his sleep he rolled over and said something about 'raising the blind,' and I am sure he has been helping some poor, sightless man out of trouble."

A Bitter Woe.

She rushed into her neighbor's house

A tale of woe to tell.

"Twas not of death nor famine drear—

Her jelly wouldn't jell.

The All-Important Question.

The hammock swayed gently too and fro in the balmy breezes of the June evening.

"Miss McSwat," whispered Mr. Montmorency Kerwhilliger, leaning a little nearer, "I would fain ask you one question."

With blushes mantling her fair face Miss Euphronia McSwat hung her head and idly toyed with the meshes of the net.

"Miss McSwat, you will pardon me for my presumption. I—"

"Of course I will, Mr. Kerwhilliger."

"As I was saying, Miss McSwat, I have known you for several months and I have learned to—"

"Yes, go on," murmured Miss McSwat as Mr. Kerwhilliger gave signs of hesitating.

"As I was remarking, I have learned to look upon you with something more than respect. I have—"

"Yes, yes!" whispered Miss McSwat, looking full into the face of the young man at her side.

"I was about to say that I have learned to respect you; to defer to your wishes; to appeal to

you. May I ask you a question upon whose answer depends the happiness not only of myself, but of others?"

"You may, Mr. Kerwhilliger; you may," whispered Miss McSwat, leaning over like the tower of Pisa.

"And are you prepared to give me an answer now?"

"Yes, now."

"Miss McSwat—Euphronia—pardon my precipitancy, but—"

"Do not hesitate, Mr. Kerwhilliger—Montmorency dear. Ask your question and I will give you an answer without delay."

As she spoke the blushes chased themselves over her face and her ripe, red lips were parted in a sweet smile.

"Euphronia, answer me, answer me from the bottom of your heart—"

"Yes, dear."

"Does the constitution follow the flag?"

A World Power.

"I tell you, ain't none o' th' nations a-goin' t' tackle us," shouted the man with the faded hair, gesticulating wildly to the assembled crowd.

"We're a world power now, an' we've got 'em all skeered. Why, we've got a big navy, th' best army in th' world, an' we've got more money than we can haul in a hay wagon. We're so almighty big an' rich that we kin—"

"Yes, we've got all them things," interrupted a woman who had slipped into the crowd and grasped the orator by the arm. "We're a world power all right, but ain't got enough wood sawed to boil Squire Richman's washin', an' if we don't git it right away a portion o' this great nation ain't a-goin' t' git no dinner. Now you mosey off home an' let Europe tremble all she wants to."

—W. M. M.

Dry Seasons Down to Date.

The following interesting statement of previous dry seasons extending back to days of the Pilgrim fathers, has been compiled and is worth preserving:

In the summer of 1621, twenty-four days in succession without rain.

In 1730, forty-one days without rain.

In 1657, seventy-five days without rain.

In 1674, forty-five days in succession without rain.

In 1638, eighty-one days in succession without rain.

In 1694, sixty-two days without rain.

In 1705, forty days in succession without rain.

In 1715, forty-six days in succession without rain.

In 1728, sixty-one days in succession without rain.

In 1730, ninety-two days in succession without rain.

In 1714, seventy-two days in succession without rain.

In 1749, one hundred and eight days in succession without rain.

In 1755, forty-two days in succession without rain.

In 1762, one hundred and twenty-three days in succession without rain.

In 1773, eighty days in succession without rain.

In 1791, eighty-two days in succession without rain.

In 1802, twenty-three days in succession without rain.

In 1812, twenty-eight days in succession without rain.

In 1856, twenty-four days in succession without rain.

In 1871, forty-two days in succession without rain.

In 1875, twenty-six days in succession without rain.

In 1876, twenty-six days in succession without rain.

It will be seen that the longest drouth that ever occurred in America was in the summer of 1762. No rain fell from the 1st of May to the 1st of September, making 123 days without rain. Many of the inhabitants sent to England for hay and grain.—Ex.